

# **DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE**

## **DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH**

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### **Together or Separate? Newspaper Coverage of Gender- Integrated Training, 1997-2000**

by

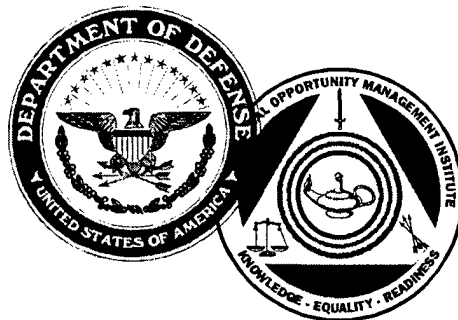
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**Together or Separate?  
Newspaper Coverage of Gender-Integrated Training,  
1997-2000**

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**Abstract**

Women and men have served in the defense of this country since the wars of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the concept of gender-integrated or mixed training is relatively new to the American military forces. The purpose of this study was to examine newspaper coverage of the issue of gender-integrated training in the military. This paper presents a brief background of women in the military Services, evolving training policies, including pros and cons of gender-integrated training, roles of the press, recommendations of panels that examined the integrated-training issue, and a review of news coverage. Then the issues and news items are analyzed and summarized, followed by conclusions and suggestions. Finally, a pilot survey was conducted among persons studying to be equal opportunity advisors at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. The students were administered a 15-item questionnaire dealing with issues raised by news media coverage of gender-integrated training. Men and women agreed that gender-integrated training should continue.

**Summer 2001**

**Opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and should not be construed to represent the official position of DEOMI, the military Services, or the Department of Defense.**

# **Together or Separate? Newspaper Coverage of Gender-Integrated Training, 1997-2000**

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## **Introduction**

President Harry S. Truman on July 26, 1948, issued Executive Order 9981 stating "there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Armed Services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible." Truman directed creation of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services (also known as the Fahy Committee). Its purpose was "to examine the rules, procedures, and practices in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures, and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order" (Wolk, 1998). Truman's executive order formally began the long process of integration of women into most military occupational specialties. The military Services have compiled a record of providing equal opportunity often exceeding the progress of civilian society, stated the executive summary of the Armed Forces Equal Opportunity Survey released in 1999 (Scarville, et. al.).

Also enacted in 1948, the Women's Armed Service Integration Act (WASIA) permitted women to become part of the regular forces but restricted their numbers to 2 percent and limited the rank and duties of women. No women could be generals or admirals, only one woman in each service could be a colonel or captain, and women could command only female units. Women had held temporary duty status or reserve status up to this time, and the WASIA provided for both regular and reserve duty status for women throughout the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. While men received special pay and benefits for having spouses and children, women had to leave the Services if they became pregnant (Sadler, 1999). Since 1948, many changes have occurred in women's roles and status in the military. This research examines one facet of those changes.

## **Purpose of This Study**

Women and men have served in the defense of this country since the wars of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the concept of gender-integrated or mixed training is relatively new to American military forces. The purpose of this study was to examine newspaper coverage of the issue of gender-integrated training in the military during 1997-2000. This paper presents background information, followed by a discussion of the contents of news reports. News items were divided into the categories of news stories and commentaries. Editorials and opinion columns fell into the commentary category. This paper presents a brief background of women in the military Services, evolving training policies, including pros and cons of gender-integrated training, roles

of the press, recommendations of panels that examined the integrated-training issue, and a review of news coverage. The issues and news items are analyzed and summarized, followed by conclusions and suggestions. Finally, a pilot survey was conducted among persons studying to be equal opportunity advisors at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. The students were administered a questionnaire dealing with issues raised by news media coverage of gender-integrated training.

### **Women and the Military**

The WASIA authorized regular and reserve status for women in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. Before then, except as nurses, women could not serve in the regular forces in peacetime. Today, about 200,000 women serve on active duty and make up 14 percent of the force; about 225,000 women serve in the reserve components and comprise 15.5 percent of their strength (Borlik, 1998). Today's military women are doctors, lawyers, pilots, equipment operators, air traffic controllers, paratroopers, forklift operators and military police, but women haven't always enjoyed such prominence in the military. It took more than 220 years and many trials, tribulations, and indignities for women to reach their present plateau in military Service, said retired Air Force Brigadier General Wilma L. Vaught, president of the board of directors of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation (Williams, 1998).

To place women's roles in the modern military in perspective, it is important to note the concept of women serving in the military is not a new phenomenon. Over the past two centuries, the wartime role society has permitted women to take has slowly expanded to include a formal military role, even in peacetime (Dansby, et. al., 2001). It is important for military women today to be aware of their history, said General Vaught, quoting a Chinese maxim: "When drinking the water, don't forget who dug the well." She added, "Many women don't understand today's military isn't the way it has always been for women." Vaught says it dismays her when women say all the problems women encountered in the military since the Revolutionary War have been solved -- especially those who say they have never been discriminated against. "They haven't really looked around them and don't really understand that all the problems are not solved," she said. "If they've just come into the military, they may believe there isn't any discrimination. As they get a little further downstream they'll get a little wiser and understand how discrimination is practiced today versus another time." During the American Revolution, when problems of caring for sick and wounded soldiers arose, the Continental Congress authorized General George Washington to hire matrons at a rate of one or two per 100 soldiers. Other women went along with their husbands as nurses, laundresses and cooks. Some women disguised themselves as men and fought as soldiers (Williams, 1998).

The author of *Women in the Civil War* estimated some 400 women served in both armies as soldiers, with other women following their husbands, sons, or fathers to the front lines. Other women served as messengers or worked as spies (Massey, 1966). In her personal account of the war, Mary Livermore of the U.S. Sanitary Commission referred to herself as "teacher, author, wife, mother, army nurse, soldier's friend, lecturer and reformer" (Massey, p. 187). "I find the requirements to serve as a nurse during the Civil War amusing," Vaught said. "They had to be over 30, plain-looking and had to wear dark clothes. Obviously, they didn't intend for nurses to be too attractive." Those standards were set by Dorothea Dix, a woman the Secretary of War

appointed as superintendent of female nurses of the Union Army (Reeves, 1999). Nurses serving the Confederates were assumed to be volunteers -- except for the documented case of Sally Tompkins. The Confederates commissioned her as a captain to run a hospital in Richmond. A famous Union nurse, Mother Mary Ann Bickerdyke, worked tirelessly to care for wounded soldiers on the battlefield and to run soup kitchens as she followed Union forces from battlefield to battlefield (Williams, 1998). Mary Edwards Walker served in the Union Army, first as a nurse and then a doctor. She was a prisoner of war and was the first woman to receive the Medal of Honor. Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman served as nurses for the Union Army (Reeves, p. 16).

During the Spanish-American War, the Daughters of the American Revolution recruited women to work for the Army as contract nurses. No nurses died from combat, but 13 died from typhoid fever. The women did so well, the Army decided to form a permanent Army Nurse Corps in 1901, and the Navy followed suit in 1908. Both Services set professional nursing qualification standards, but the women received no rank, no command authority, and no retirement plan. When the Navy Nurse Corps was authorized, only 20 women were included in its ranks. In 1909, the Red Cross Nursing Service was founded to provide a reserve of trained nurses for the two military nursing corps and the Red Cross (Reeves, 1999).

The Navy broke its nurse-only tradition during World War I by accepting women as yeomen. About 12,500 women, including some 17-year-old graduates of finishing schools and clerical schools, were recruited to perform clerical duties. Women were accepted into the Naval Reserve and given rank. Most were almost immediately promoted to yeoman first class, whereas men had to work their way up through the ranks. The Army sent about 300 women in uniform to France as Signal Corps telephone operators. "They were promised they'd become regular Army soldiers and receive the same veterans status as men, but that didn't happen," General Vaught said. Those women later waged a 58-year-long battle to get what they'd earned, she said, and most were dead by the time Congress made good on the promises in 1977. Shortly after World War I, the Army gave its nurses relative rank up to major, but they could not command men (Williams, 1998). Altogether, approximately 23,000 Army and Navy nurses served during World War I (Reeves, 1999). About 90,000 women eventually went overseas to support the soldiers, according to the Women's Overseas Service League, founded in 1921 to help women who served. Only 33,000 were officially enrolled in the Services (Smith, 1998).

During World War II, thousands of women joined the Women's Army Corps; the Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service); the WASPs (Women Airforce Service Pilots); the Naval Reserve; the Marines; and the Coast Guard Women's Reserve, the SPARs (from the Service's motto, "Semper Paratus," "always prepared"). Initially, the Army put women in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, meaning they were not part of the regular Army, and they had ranks different from the men. The Army changed it to the Women's Army Corps, where WACs had regular rank just like the men. The Army Nurse Corps kept their relative rank until late in the war. "Again, women's acceptance by the military was crisis-driven," Vaught noted. The WASIA codified women's status as it was at the end of World War II. "It did give women rank and a permanent place in the Services in wartime and peacetime," Vaught said (Williams, 1998). During the Korean Conflict, nurses served with Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units to treat wounded soldiers, who were moved to Navy hospital ships for

further treatment and evacuation. The newest military nursing service, the Air Force, received introduction by fire during the Korean War. By 1953, nearly 3,000 nurses were serving in the Air Force (Reeves, 1999).

In 1951, the Defense Advisory Committee for Women in the Services (DACOWITS) was established by Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall to provide recommendations relevant to the optimum utilization of women in America's Armed Forces and on quality of life issues impacting the mission readiness of military women. Women were prohibited from becoming generals or admirals until President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Public Law 90-130 on November 8, 1967. The measure opened women's promotions to general and flag ranks. As the Vietnam War wound down and the all-volunteer force came along in the early 1970s, women's value to the military became recognized more, General Vaught said. "It was tough for women in the 1700s, 1800s, and 1900s, and it will be tough for women in the next century," she said. "But women proved they could do the job as well as most men. They've gained the respect they've deserved all along" (Williams, 1998).

Between 1972 and 1978, many changes occurred in training and in opportunities for women. With the end of the draft in June 1973 and the change to the All-Volunteer Force, women made up 2 percent of the total force, and women were breaking gender barriers. For example, Navy women with children were allowed to stay on active duty (Reeves, 1999). Services turned to women to help supply the needed volunteers. Among reasons for this increase in the number of women in the Services were: the end of the draft, a decline in the number of eligible men, "baby boomers" growing too old for recruitment, and the recruitment of more women volunteers. In 1973, Congress disestablished the Women's Reserves and authorized women to enter the regular Coast Guard. DACOWITS applied pressure to equalize presence of servicewomen and in 1974 Congress rescinded the higher enlistment age for women as the Services gradually began to equalize other standards. The Air Force, Navy, and Coast Guard integrated their basic training, but the Army vacillated – consolidating boot camp, then returning to gender-segregated training, then going back to mixed-recruit training. The Marine Corps retained separate boot camps for men and women, but increased weapons and combat-skills training for enlisted women (Sadler, 1999).

Women's roles and assignments continued to change during Desert Storm. The issue of women in combat was heightened even more than in World War II, as advanced technology used in the war obscured areas of combat and non-combat for the approximately 41,000 female troops who participated. Desert Shield/Storm was the first major deployment since Vietnam and the largest deployment of military women ever. Women were involved inextricably in the war effort. Throughout Desert Storm, women performed flight operations within the combat zone; a number of women participated in support and rescue assignments as physically demanding as combat and involving significant risk. Although women were unofficially excluded from combat, they were assigned posts positioning them in or near the line of fire as the "front" changed often and non-combat units regularly took casualties (Peach, 1996). Despite earlier concerns, Desert Storm did not result in high casualty rates for the U.S. military. Almost 300 persons died from their participation in Desert Storm with battle deaths (148) equivalent to non-battle deaths. Fifteen women died as a result of the war: five killed in action and 10 from other causes (Reeves, 1999). Although the Gulf War was a catalyst for change in aviation, ground

combat remained closed. However, the female proportion of troops in overseas operations is increasing: women were 2 percent of the forces in Grenada in 1983; 4 percent in Panama in 1989; and more than 8 percent in the Gulf War in 1991 (Sadler, 1999).

During 1989-1999, the percentage of women for all Services increased from 10.8 to 14.2 with the Air Force having the highest average percentage of women with 15.9, and the Marines having the lowest percentage with 5.0 (DEOMI, 2000b). More than 30 percent of enlisted women were in occupations in the functional support administration area, while 35 percent of female officers were classified as medical (DEOMI, 2000a). In 2001, more than 90 percent of Army and Marine Corps occupations are open to women, but the major units of infantry, artillery, tanks, and Special Forces remain closed to women. Over time, remnants of the combat-exclusion rule might erode as women continue to move closer to the battle lines (Sadler, 1999).

### **Evolving Training Policies**

As women gradually continued to take more active roles in training for and participating in combat, much of the training became more gender integrated or mixed. Over the last 30 years, women have increased from 2 percent to 14.2 percent of military personnel. As women increased their presence and roles in the military, some of the old guard among military and civilian leaders strongly resisted further integration of women in the Armed Forces. Proponents of gender-integrated training argue soldiers who fight together should train together (Johnson, 1998). The Army, Navy, and Air Force still are struggling with recommendations the nation's Armed Services should separate men and women for much of basic and advanced training and house them in separate barracks. On the other hand, women's rights advocates criticize the same recommendations by opposing the idea the military return to segregating women and men (Dansby, et. al., 2001).

The Air Force began mixed-gender training in 1976 (Christenson, 1999). After conducting trials in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Army in 1993 began employing gender-integrated training (GIT) full-time (Shenon, 1998). Women and men work with each other throughout high school and will eventually work together in the Army. So why, the leaders reasoned, should basic training be any different? The Army's senior leadership decided GIT was the way to go. Skeptics thought it would not work, but with the training program in place and working, GIT experienced very few ripples, according to *Soldiers* magazine (Lane, 1995). The Navy began integrated training in 1994.

Following a scandal involving widespread charges of sexual harassment and assault at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and other military installations in 1996-1997, some U.S. Congress members called for separate training of military men and women. In March 1997, Army Chief of Staff General Dennis J. Reimer told *Soldiers* he favored gender-integrated basic and advanced individual training over separated-gender training. "I think the issue is that males and females are going to have to exist together in the United States Army," Reimer said. "We have to find a way to overcome these tensions. My view is that you start that early on. All the studies I've seen have convinced me that male performance and female performance are increased and improved if we start [gender-integrated training] at the very beginning. I think we have to realize that we're an integrated Army and that we have males

and females serving together. And we need to stress that from the very beginning" (Gilmore, 1997). Johnson (1998) contended training men and women together enhances military effectiveness. Women are a critical part of our military forces. The Air Force has trained men and women together during basic training for more than 20 years, has the largest percentage of women of all the Services (16%) and has the greatest percentage of positions open to both sexes (97%). The Army and Navy noticed a decline in complaints of sexual harassment after they began gender-integrated basic training several years ago, she wrote (Johnson, 1998).

Whether it's learning to use a protective mask, shoot a rifle, or merely to salute, all potential soldiers have to learn the basic skills before heading off to advanced individual training. When it comes to transforming a civilian into a soldier, it doesn't much matter what gender the trainee is -- everyone has to go through the same process, stated *Soldiers* (Lane, 1995). The debate, wrote Dansby (2001), is really about whether military traditions and standards are under siege; it's about whether women have "*feminized*" the military, and whether women soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines should receive special accommodations. He wrote, "This begs the question: *Is the military closer to figuring out how to persuade men and women to get along better?*"

### **Kassebaum Baker Committee**

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen on June 27, 1997, announced the appointment of the Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training and Related Issues, an independent panel comprised of 11 citizens and chaired by former U. S. Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker, a Republican from Kansas. The committee's mission was to assess training programs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps and to determine how best to train a gender-integrated, all-volunteer force to ensure they are disciplined, effective, and ready (Kassebaum Baker, 1997).

Other committee members were: Retired Vice Admiral Richard Allen, USN, former Commander, Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet; Mr. John Dancy, former broadcast journalist with NBC News; Retired Lieutenant General Robert H. Forman, USA, former Deputy Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command; Retired Major General Donald R. Gardner, USMC, former Commander of III Marine Expeditionary Force, Japan; Retired Major General Marcelite J. Harris, USAF, former Director of Maintenance, Headquarters, USAF; the Honorable Deval L. Patrick, former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights; Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Provost, Stanford University; Ms. Ginger Lee Simpson, Retired U.S. Navy Enlisted, former Director, U.S. Navy Senior Enlisted Academy; Dr. Carolyn Ellis Staton, Associate Provost of the University of Mississippi, and former Vice-Chair of DACOWITS; and Professor Marilyn V. Yarbrough, School of Law, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

On December 16, 1997, the committee reported to Secretary Cohen. The chair stated her committee was "pleased to submit our final report, which contains recommendations on how best to train our gender-integrated, all-volunteer force to ensure that it is disciplined, effective, and ready. The recommendations are based on our assessment of the current initial entry training programs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines" (Kassebaum Baker, 1997). For six months, the committee looked at the full cycle for the recruit, starting at the recruiting station, through basic and advanced training. The committee talked to newly

assigned service members and their supervisors at their operational units. Committee members traveled to 16 military sites, including major training facilities of all Services. Committee members talked to more than 1,000 recruits, 500 instructors, 300 first-term service members, and 275 supervisors in operational units. The committee's intention was to contribute to the effort to craft a sound policy for training young men and women today for tomorrow's missions, wrote Kassebaum Baker (1997).

The report continued: regarding gender-integrated training specifically, as the Secretary of Defense noted when he announced the committee's establishment, the problems at Aberdeen and elsewhere have raised questions about the success of gender-integrated training. The committee believes it is important to put gender-integrated training in perspective. Perhaps most importantly, the committee underscores that women in the military have been proudly and proficiently serving this nation for years. The committee believes that the increasing number of women in expanded roles is an important reason why the United States is able to maintain an effective and efficient volunteer military force (Kassebaum Baker). All Services conduct gender-integrated training at some point during the initial entry training cycle, the report stated. The Army, Navy, and Air Force have gender-integrated programs in basic and advanced training. The Marines train separately in basic training, but have a gender-integrated 17-day follow-on program and gender-integrated advanced training. Contrary to public perception, Kassebaum Baker wrote, a minority of male recruits routinely train with females in basic training. This is, in part, due to the percentage of female recruits and how training units are grouped. Approximately 50 percent of the Army's male recruits, 25 percent of the Navy's male recruits, and 40 percent of the Air Force's male recruits routinely train with females in basic training. In follow-on training, all the Services conduct gender-integrated training, and women are dispersed more widely throughout skill-training courses. Nevertheless, at least 30 percent of the Army male trainees and 25 percent of the Marine male trainees train in all-male units in advanced training because they are in combat arms specialties. Consequently, an evaluation of gender-integrated training is only part of any assessment of effectiveness of the overall training programs, she stated. The committee made recommendations regarding gender-integration in training and other issues impacting effectiveness of the training programs. The committee intended for its recommendations to be viewed as a complete package, since training is a "building-block process beginning with the quality of the recruit" (Kassebaum Baker).

The committee recommended the smallest units in recruit training be same-sex, and more resources and care go into selecting and training recruit trainers and to recruit more female trainers. The panel strongly supported a gender-integrated military force, said Kassebaum Baker. However, the committee considered the "most contentious issue" to be gender integration at the lowest level training units. This is the platoon in the Army, recruit division in the Navy and flight in the Air Force. The panel recommended these be same-sex units. Members stated they believed this would have little impact on gender-integrated training (Garamone, 1997).

Other recommendations included:

- Toughen physical fitness requirements and expand instruction on nutrition and wellness.

- End the split option for reserve component soldiers. Under this option the Army allows reserve component soldiers to undergo training at one time and advanced training later.
- Increase support-group staffing and enhance availability to recruits.
- End the recruiters assistant program.
- Eliminate "stress cards" in the Navy. Stress cards are lists of sailors' rights. Recruits can pull one out if they think recruit division commanders are being too tough on them.
- Enforce policies to eradicate disparaging references to gender.
- Teach consistent rules on fraternization.
- Enforce tough punishments for false accusations regarding sexual harassment and misconduct.
- Improve values training in all initial entry training programs.

Calling it a "good report," Secretary Cohen turned it over to the military Services for reviews and responses within 90 days. In March 1998, Cohen deferred a decision on gender integration at the lowest levels of basic training, but told the Services to implement most other recommendations made by the Kassebaum Baker panel. Speaking to reporters at the Pentagon on March 16, Cohen said he told the Services to establish incentives to attract the best trainers, to make basic training physically tougher and to ensure separate billeting -- if not separate buildings -- for male and female recruits. A reporter asked: "Are you saying that gender integrated training in and of itself will be maintained?" Secretary Cohen replied, "Yes. Until I see what the results are going to be from these changes, then I reserve that judgment. But I think it's important that we take all of the steps that have been outlined (Cohen, 1998). The Secretary said gender-integrated training would continue as it was, until he and other military leaders assessed results that the recommended changes would bring. Cohen said the military would institute "about 95 percent" of the panel's recommendations and continue to assess the results.

The Services agreed on these recommendations of the Kassebaum Baker panel:

- Add more female recruiters and trainers.
  - Devise better selection processes for trainers and more clarity in training authority.
  - Institute training to produce professional relationships between genders.
  - Place more emphasis on core military values.
  - Develop more consistent training standards between the genders.
  - Put more emphasis on patriotism and the challenge of the military in advertising.
- (Garamone, 1998)

In June 1998, Secretary Cohen approved Service plans for continuation of gender integration in elemental training units (platoons, divisions, flights) as the optimum training format for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. He approved continuation of the established Marine Corps policy for gender-separate basic training with a gender-integrated follow-on program. In reaching his decisions, Secretary Cohen said: "With their different missions, traditions and conditions of service, some differences in the ways the Services conduct their basic training are appropriate and desirable" (DoD, 1998).

## **The Blair Commission**

While the Kassebaum Baker panel commissioned by the Secretary of Defense was still collecting its data, the U. S. Congress appointed another group, referred to as the Blair Commission. The Commission on Military Training and Gender-Related Issues was established under Title V, Subtitle F of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998. The mandate was set forth in Public Law 105-85 Section 562(b)(2) and (e)(2), enacted on November 18, 1997. The 10-member commission was composed of five commissioners appointed by the House Committee on National Security and five commissioners appointed by the Senate Committee on Armed Services. The commission was chaired by Anita Blair, a Washington, D.C., attorney who was Executive Vice President of the Independent Women's Forum, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to research and public education on issues concerning women. Other commission members were Honorable Frederick F. Y. Pang, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, vice chairman; Dr. Nancy Cantor, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Michigan; Retired Lieutenant General George R. Christmas, former Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Headquarters Marine Corps; Retired Command Sergeant Major Robert A. Dare, Jr., former Command Sergeant Major, United States Army, Forces Command; Retired Lieutenant General William M. Keys, former Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic; Thomas Moore, Director of International Studies at The Heritage Foundation; Dr. Charles Moskos, Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University; Honorable Barbara Spyridon Pope, President of The Pope Group; and Dr. Mady Wechsler Segal, Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean at the University of Maryland.

The mission of Blair's group was to review requirements and restrictions regarding cross-gender relationships of members of the Armed Forces, to review basic training programs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps and to make recommendations on improvements to those programs, requirements, and restrictions. The committee focused on operational readiness as it relates to recruits and Initial Entry Training (IET), with emphasis on basic training. In March 1999, the commission presented a status report to Congress, stating: "The Commission concludes that the Services are providing the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines required by the operating forces to carry out their assigned missions; therefore, each Service should be allowed to continue to conduct basic training in accordance with its current policies. This includes the manner in which basic trainees are housed and organized into units. This conclusion does not imply the absence of challenges and issues associated with the dynamics found in a gender integrated basic training environment. Therefore, improvements to Initial Entry Training that have been made by the Services or are currently being considered must be sustained and continually reviewed" (Blair, 1999).

Commission members split on the gender-integrated training issue with six members voting yea, one abstaining (Moskos) and three voting nay (Blair, Keys, Moore). Moskos explained, "I was particularly struck by the overwhelming consensus among trainers that something is seriously flawed in gender-integrated training. At the same time, it must be noted that recruits in gender-integrated settings are much more positive about IET than are the trainers. But we ought not to ignore the recurrent theme among trainers that a core set of problems does derive from gender-integrated settings. These include physical strength differences between the

sexes, maintenance of privacy of the sexes, sexual distractions, and perceptions of double standards applied to men and women in disciplinary actions and accusations of sexual harassment” (Blair, 1999). Moskos concluded that the bottom line must be improving military readiness.

Commissioners Blair, Keys, and Moore stated they agreed with Moskos, but they wrote separately to add, not only is there evidence of serious problems in gender-integrated training, but there is also substantial evidence gender-separate training produces superior results. The Marine Corps is the only service employing gender-separate basic training. The Army, Navy, and Air Force made it clear to the Blair Commission they are satisfied with their current training and do not plan to change from gender-integrated to gender-separate basic training, even in view of the Kassebaum Baker recommendations (the vast majority of which were readily adopted by those Services). The commissioners stated the Army, Navy, and Air Force should (a) collect data to permit objective evaluation of existing gender-integrated training; and (b) test alternate models to generate comparative data on the military effectiveness of gender-integrated versus gender-separate training. These studies should be performed under the auspices of qualified, impartial outside organizations, they wrote (Blair, 1999).

When the Blair Commission presented its status report to Congress, the chair made her own statement. Basic training, she said, whether gender-separate or gender-integrated, presents challenges. Blair said gender-integrated training entails special problems that simply do not arise in gender-separate training. These problems revolve around the difficulties of providing appropriate privacy for both sexes, accommodating fundamental physiological differences, and controlling sexual conduct. There is no way to tell whether benefits of gender-integration outweigh costs because none of the Services has compared alternatives or evaluated the costs and benefits. Indeed, each of the Services has told the Commission it is not conducting, and has no plans to conduct, any studies to evaluate the effectiveness of gender-integrated as compared with gender-separate training. After calling for an evaluation by an independent organization, Blair discussed some “challenges” of gender-integrated training: confusion; inconvenience; loss of formal contacts; additional stress; “no talk, no touch,” and loss of discipline. Separating male and female recruits in basic training units will assist them in learning discipline and self-control, the most valuable foundation on which to build maturity and judgment, Blair stated (U. S. House, 1999).

### **Roles of the Press**

Representatives of news media report on events such as historic “firsts” mentioned above, as well as training and deployments, on a regular basis. Some reporters are assigned to cover the Pentagon as their routine beat, and they would report and analyze reports from the panels examining training. Reporters are the first link in a chain of “gatekeepers” who sort facts and stories, allowing certain details through the gates for publication or broadcast (White, 1950). “Gatekeeping” is an important concept in communication theory and research as well as in the practice of journalism. Psychologist Kurt Lewin coined the term in 1947 to describe the process of family members at the dinner table. David Manning White in a 1950 study of one editor’s news choices borrowed the term “gatekeeper.” What reaches news consumers in any given locale is but a grain in the sand of world events. The gatekeeping approach to news assumes actors along the news-flow chain (information officers, reporters, wire editors, copy editors) use

certain criteria to select from myriad events what will be passed on to the next link in the chain (Pasadeos, et. al., 1998). This researcher has found that sometimes the media actually use small percentages of the available news.

Communication through the mass media is a fundamental component of recognition of many social problems (Arkin, 1998). Mass media report, reflect and influence public opinion. Arkin wrote mass media objectives are: to entertain or inform, cover short-term events, deliver salient pieces of information, reflect society, address personal concerns, and make a profit. The five central functions of the mass media, wrote Wilson and Gutierrez (1995), are:

- surveillance, the sentinel or lookout role
- correlation, the interpretation and linking function which helps audiences understand what is happening
- transmission, the socialization function which defines the society's norms and values
- entertainment, the function for enjoyment and diversion
- economic service, the function which deals primarily with delivering an audience for advertising messages.

Most reputable news media in the United States advocate the social responsibility theory of the press in which media seek to uphold their obligation to inform and educate the public -- the audience members. Media serve a "watchdog" function to inform the public of wrongdoings in government agencies, such as the military Services. Most journalists strive to be fair and accurate, but sometimes they let the drive to meet deadlines or to top the competition take control. Journalists try to follow the principle of objectivity. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) pointed out one function of objectivity is to protect a reporter, editor, or publisher from criticism. In effect, objectivity mitigates gatekeeping bias (Stone, et. al., 1999). "Whatever else can be said about objectivity, it has become ingrained in the language and culture of American journalism." Objectivity still forms the basis for the most common model of news reporting and writing prevailing in newspapers (Beasley & Mirando, 1998). Walter Lippmann wrote: "The press is like the beam of a searchlight that moves restless about, bringing one episode and then another out of darkness into vision. Men cannot do the work of the world by this light alone" (1961). Along with the media responsibility to keep Americans fully informed comes the obligation to provide a full and open discussion of public matters, wrote Rowse (2000).

Readers and viewers might perceive news reports as negative because they point out flaws in a system. However, it may be a matter of perspective. Journalists consider news values when gathering information and reporting stories. Stovall lists news values as impact, timeliness, prominence, proximity, conflict, bizarre or unusual, and currency (1998). The American Society of Newspaper Editors stated credibility is based on "enduring journalistic values -- balance, fairness and wholeness; accuracy/authenticity; accessibility; leadership -- and behavioral factors such as business practices and journalists' attitudes and behaviors" (Christopher, 1999). Since many Americans have either served in the military or know someone who has served, and the military is responsible for national defense, many news judgment factors apply to news reports about the military. Newspaper readers pay attention to such articles. News media influence and reflect public opinion, including those of members of the Armed Services, their friends and families, and the American public. Caesar Andrews, editor of Gannett News Service, advised news reporters to use these standards: "Check the facts. Insist on fair

newsgathering. Think through why there's a need to publish. Then print only what you can explain and defend as news" (Media Leaders Forum, 1999).

### **Methodology**

A distinguishing characteristic of communication research is its focus on human symbolic exchanges, of verbal and nonverbal messages. The methodology used in this study was content analysis, a research method or measurement technique involving a systematic study of the content of communication messages. Berelson defined content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (1952). Content analysis can be used in research seeking to explain or describe communication. Its advantages lie in its ability to describe the messages under study, to make inferences about the creator of the message, and in providing a heuristic function to research (Stacks & Hocking, 1997). Content analyses appear frequently in journalism and mass communication journals. In fact, 40 percent of the articles appearing in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* in the 1990s were content analyses (Stone, et. al., 1999).

The purpose of this study was to examine newspaper coverage of the issue of gender-integrated training in the military. The study presents comparisons of the contents of news reports. Newspaper items were divided into the categories of news stories and commentaries with editorials and opinion columns falling into the commentary category. The unit of analysis was the news item. This examination includes newspaper coverage of a period spanning from 1997 through 2000. Issues and news items were analyzed and summarized, followed by conclusions and suggestions. In this case, the universe of information was examined, as opposed to a representative sample. Another judgment call was whether the story's emphasis was positive or negative regarding the gender-integrated issue. Results were then tabulated, analyzed and interpreted. Holsti's reliability formula was applied to ascertain inter-coder reliability (Stacks & Hocking, 1997). A standardized coding form was created, and a copy is at Appendix A.

Copies of news reports and commentaries covering the period 1997-2000 were obtained by searching the Internet. Additional copies of press clippings were obtained from the DoD public affairs office and the vertical files of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. Expected results were that journalists would emphasize some key actions, such as when Secretary Cohen appointed the Kassebaum Baker panel, when Congress appointed the Blair Commission and when the groups reported. When politicians took stands for or against the issue, they would attract media attention. This researcher expected reporting in most cases to rely heavily upon information supplied to them from primary sources. Various newspaper stories and commentaries are quoted as examples.

Also, a pilot survey was conducted among individuals studying to be equal opportunity advisors at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. The students were administered a 15-item questionnaire dealing with issues raised by news media coverage of gender-integrated training.

Research questions posed were:

- R1: To what extent would newspapers emphasize information about gender-integrated training?
- R2: Do the news reports appear to be accurate?
- R3: Did press commentaries favor gender-integrated training or oppose it?
- R4: Will the number of articles and commentaries decrease each year?
- R5: Regarding the survey: Will there be significant differences in opinions between men and women, African Americans and Caucasians, and persons who completed gender-integrated and those who did not?

## Findings

This section of the paper presents findings regarding newspaper coverage of gender-integrated training in the military Services between 1997 and 2000. A total of 113 news stories and 36 commentaries were examined from the four-year period. This researcher predicted the number of items would be highest during 1997, when the topic reached its peak in controversy, and would decrease each year as interest in the issue decreased.

### 1997 News Stories

For 1997, 52 news articles were examined. A February 8 article from Reuters news service printed in *The Orlando Sentinel* was headlined: "Army wants to maintain coed training." Its deck head stated, "Some lawmakers say male and female recruits should be separated." On March 11, *USA Today* quoted Secretary Cohen as saying he would not order the Army, Navy and Air Force to return to single-sex training without compelling evidence it would solve problems (Komarow, 1997). Also in March, *The New York Times* ran a feature about the Navy's boot camp at Great Lakes, Ill., where trainees "are separated only in bunking, bathrooms and showers" and the focus is on producing quality sailors, regardless of race or gender (Johnson, 1997). On March 17, the *Air Force Times* ran a story, "Cohen assesses male-female training." After visiting Lackland Air Force Base, Cohen said he found no compelling evidence to warrant changing the current system (Wilson, 1997). In April 1997, the Marines began their "first foray into co-ed combat training" with the new Marine Combat Training Course at Camp Lejeune, N.C. (Fuentes, 1997). Meanwhile, the Marines announced the Corps would continue gender-segregated basic training (Bowman, 1997).

A strong proponent of gender-segregated training was U. S. Rep. Roscoe G. Bartlett, R-Md., a member of the House National Security Committee. He said gender-integrated training "is neither in the best interest of women or the best interest of military preparedness" (Scarborough, 1997a). In order to remove "temptation," Bartlett sponsored an amendment to the defense authorization bill, and he eventually found 125 co-sponsors. Senator Olympia J. Snowe, R-Maine, introduced a bill to keep the status quo (Schmitt, 1997). At the same time that Congress and the Senate were to begin debating the legislation, results of a 1995 study by the U. S. Army Research Institute were released. The survey indicated drill sergeants did not believe they were taught how to train women as well as men in the same basic training (Scarborough, 1997b). General William Hartzog, Chief of Army Training and Doctrine Command, in late May 1997, told reporters he stood by gender-integrated training (Naylor, 1997). The same issue of

*Army Times* carried a story about Senator Robert Byrd, D-W. Va., planning to submit legislation calling for separate training and an independent commission to study gender issues. "As the House National Security Committee worked June 11 on the 1998 defense authorization bill, Rep. Bartlett conceded he did not have the votes to force an immediate change, so he settled for a compromise ordering Congress to debate the issue again next year after an independent panel reviews military training" (Maze, 1997).

On June 27, 1997, Secretary Cohen announced the Kassebaum Baker panel. He said he was concerned changes recommended by the panel might be viewed by some, including members of Congress, as a setback to women (Associated Press, 1997). In July 1997, the *Army Times* reported Cohen said his visits to training bases had not provided any evidence to segregate training by gender. The same story stated: "All four service chiefs have come out against congressionally mandated gender segregation of recruit training" (Compart, 1997a). The *Navy Times* reported on July 21, 1997, neither Rep. Bartlett nor Sen. Byrd would introduce legislation concerning separate training, but they wanted a comprehensive study of gender issues in the military. Kassebaum Baker said her panel would keep an open mind.

*USA Today* on September 15, 1997, ran three stories about the integrated-segregated training issue. On Sept. 29, 1997, *Navy Times* reprinted a *USA Today* article titled "Separate but equal," telling how the Marine Corps "sticks with what leaders say has been working all along." The article points out how during the previous year there were nine sexual harassment cases involving recruits and permanent personnel at Parris Island, S.C., and none among recruits (Stone, 1997b). In October 1997, the *Washington Post* headlined a story about a report from the DACOWITS chair about a visit to Fort Jackson, S. C. and Asia "Persistent Army gender issues cited" (Priest, 1997). Chair Judith Youngman said her group found gender discrimination, harassment and – in one instance – a hostile environment at military installations.

A Nov. 10, 1997, story in *Navy Times* stated the Kassebaum Baker panel was still debating the fundamental question of whether to recommend gender-integrated training. The next week a story appeared about the Congressional commission appointed to look mainly at gender-integrated training. The *Army Times* pointed out the commission seemed to duplicate the work of the Kassebaum Baker panel (Compart, 1997b). In early December 1997, articles appeared about the military practice "Don't look, don't touch" and how Service members were concerned about being accused of sexual harassment if they even looked at a woman for a few seconds. "Don't look, don't touch" was mentioned in the Kassebaum Baker report released on December 16, 1997, but the panel's recommendation about gender-separate basic training drew the headlines. Some examples are: "Single-sex boot camps urged," *USA Today*; "Civilian Committee on military favors separate female training," *Washington Post*; "Conservatives salute idea of ending coed basic training," *Washington Times*; and "Panel's advice to troops is attacked," *The New York Times*.

U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-New York, called the recommendations "a slap in the face to women" and urged more emphasis be placed on improving training and discipline in integrated units (Myers, 1997). During the period between the release of the report and the end of the year, articles appeared showing how well gender-segregated basic training works for the Marines and how gender-integrated training works for the Air Force. Other articles referred to

“gender woes” and the panel’s referring to mixing sexes as a “distraction.” The reports were well received by conservatives and criticized by women’s groups (Stone, 1997c).

### 1997 Commentaries

Eighteen commentaries for the year 1997 were examined. The opinions can be divided into five in favor of gender-integrated training, eight against gender-integrated or for same-gender training, and five were neutral. Appearing under a headline “The battle of the sexes” in the *Air Force Times* in June, a column by Rep. Bartlett defended single-sex training, while Gen. Ronald R. Fogleman, Air Force Chief of Staff, wrote how integrated training helps build teamwork. The Congressman called for an end to integrated training and to “go back to what works” (Bartlett, 1997). Fogleman referred to gender-integrated training as the “vital first step in fostering equal opportunity and building the teamwork so vital to our effectiveness as a fighting force (Fogleman, 1997).

Other opinions favoring gender-integrated training were headlined: “Segregation no solution to harassment in military,” “Panel: ‘No talk, no touch’ is no good,” “Proposal violates Army foundation,” and “Segregation is a lousy idea” by Rep. Maloney. Separating the sexes would make women second-class soldiers and wreck morale, she wrote (Maloney, 1997). Her column in *USA Today* opposed William Hamilton, who stated, “Let’s end this wasteful and disruptive social experiment. We should train women for their actual jobs rather than how to kill with a bayonet” (Hamilton, 1997). One of the strongest opinions supporting separate training came from the *Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph*: “We need trained killers. In such an environment females are a distraction. On the battlefield they’ll be a liability. Rather than accommodate the presence of females in fighting units, we should eliminate it. Fortunately, there’s no shortage of opportunities for women in virtually every other area of society” (Rosen, 1997). Perhaps the most attention-getting headline was: “No ‘lust in the dust’ in combat zone” over a column opposing integrated training and women in combat (Dunne, 1997). Endorsing the Kassebaum Baker recommendations, the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution* editorialized that segregated training makes good sense, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* stated a gender-split will make the military more effective. One “neutral” commentary in the *Washington Post*, pointed out most of the panel’s recommendations would take money while the Clinton administration and Congress expected the military to do more for less. The November 1997 issue of *Marine Corps Gazette* included an article discussing unit cohesion and another about gender integrated/segregated training.

### 1998 News Stories

A total of 43 news stories from 1998 were analyzed. *Navy Times* in January 1998 ran an article, “Different panels, same subject,” which mentioned panels probing issues such as sexual harassment, fraternization, adultery, and gender-integrated training. The article referred to Kassebaum Baker’s report, the Blair Commission and the continuous review of gender issues by DACOWITS (Compart, 1998a). A few days later, in an interview, Gen. Reimer reiterated support for gender-integrated training and challenged perceptions recruits are not getting adequate training in boot camp (Moniz, 1998). Also in January, DACOWITS released a report from its 20-member panel visit to 12 military training locations. The report showed service

members want more integration of sexes (Shenon, 1998). *Navy Times* stated: "DACOWITS' findings put it on a collision course with the Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training and Related Issues" (Compart, 1998b). Gender-integrated training was among DACOWITS' Goals for 1998.

News stories in February and March focused on Congress and the Senate's appointees to the Blair Commission. Articles pointed out Blair, a member of Virginia Military Institute's board of visitors, voted against opening VMI to women (Scarborough, 1998) and advocated separating the sexes in basic training (Maze, 1998). On March 17, 1998, Secretary Cohen announced basic training would remain as it had been, but he ordered changes in recruiting, training, and housing for new recruits. An *Air Force Times* article announcing "Coed training will continue" was accompanied by one saying "Basic grows tougher" with a deck headline, "Ask and you shall receive, Lackland recruits learn" (Jordan, 1998).

In May 1998, the House National Security Committee (HNSC) voted to require the Army, Navy, and Air Force to house and train male and female recruits separately beginning by April 1999. Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., chairman of the military subcommittee of the HNSC, expected the Blair Commission to submit an interim report by September 1 whether men and women should be segregated in basic training. If the commission were to recommend gender-integrated training, Congress could modify the April 1999 date for policy changes. As debate continued on the topic, Cohen in July 1998 told Congressional negotiators he might recommend a veto of the defense bill if the Services were forced to change their policies on recruit training. In mid-September, a Congressional conference committee stated men and women could continue training together as long as they were housed separately. Bartlett said the Congressional committee's action "jeopardizes the lives of our young men and women." He wrote: "Congress must ensure that national security, and not equal opportunity, remains the top priority" (Christenson, 1998). Meanwhile, the Coast Guard, part of the Department of Transportation, stated its own study showed "Mixed training suits Coast Guard fine." Women comprise 10 percent of the Coast Guard (Katz-Stone, 1998).

### 1998 Commentaries

Seven commentaries from 1998 were examined. An article in *The Diversity Factor* discussed gender integration in the Canadian military, which was mandated to develop a plan to completely integrate women by 1999. The article concluded once diversity and leadership skills have been learned and connections made, people must be held accountable for their behaviors and their results – in diversity as in every other area (White, 1998). An editorial headlined "Boot Camp and Sex" stated that the Clinton administration seemed to view the military more as a social experiment than as a fighting force. It suggested legislation initiated by Sen. Byrd and Rep. Bartlett should be followed through. "Both men realize that in war, victory goes not to the most sensitive, but to the best prepared," stated the *Detroit News* (1998). The *Wall Street Journal* editorialized, "The military should fight wars, not sexism," calling for a re-evaluation of women's military roles before the next military conflict (Mersereau, 1998).

What happened at Aberdeen, wrote retired Air Force Lt. Col. Karen Johnson, was "(if you were listening to certain U.S. Congressmen and Senators) a predictable outcome of training

military women and men together. Basic instincts rule! Men can't control their basic instincts, or submerge the urge to merge, so – remove the women." In a commentary on the National Organization for Women website, Johnson wrote she agreed with most recommendations the Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training made to the Secretary of Defense. However, "the recommendation of training males and females separately at the beginning of their military careers is regressive and does not remedy the problems that led to the formation of this committee," she stated (Johnson, 1998).

*U.S. News & World Report* concluded: "If the pentagon doesn't change the system, Congress could, although denunciation of the (Kassebaum Baker) report by some women in Congress promises at least a few fireworks" (Newman, 1998). In a commentary titled "Common sense and co-ed training," Elaine Donnelly wrote, "If we fight as we train – burdened with unprecedented disciplinary problems that our potential enemies do not have – America's armed forces will be in deep trouble" (1998). Sen. Snowe wrote in the *Washington Times*, gender-integrated training improves the performance of men and women in the military and prepares them for the future battles they must fight and win together (Snowe, 1998).

### **1999 News Stories**

An Associated Press story on March 2, 1999, stated that General Accounting Office auditors had concluded it would not cost the military any more money to house male and female recruits in separate barracks. This widely circulated story was one of 12 examined for 1999. Two weeks later, the Blair Commission recommended the military continue training male and female recruits in mixed units and barracks. Lawmakers in both houses had been awaiting the commission's conclusions before acting on proposals for greater separation of the sexes in boot-camp housing and early training (Richter, 1999). In May, DACOWITS urged Cohen to open more combat slots for women, and the group called for studies of cost and other factors involved in allowing women to serve on submarine crews (Matthews, 1999). Recommendation #1 in the DACOWITS Spring 1999 Issue Book concluded: "As mission readiness is the primary concern of the operating forces, it is also apparent that the continuous study of the issue consumes valuable time and resources. Therefore, current policies should remain in place until there is compelling evidence of systemic failure requiring further review" (DACOWITS, 1999).

When the Blair Commission's 2,700-page final report was submitted in August 1999 after 15 months of testimony and site visits, *The Washington Times* stated it "may be the final word in the long debate over mixed-sex training" (Scarborough, 1999). The report said each Service should be allowed to continue to conduct basic training in accordance with its current policies, although some challenges and issues remain. Retired Air Force Col. Frederick Pang, commission vice chairman, was quoted as saying 58 percent of 2,996 drill sergeants reported that mixed-gender instruction either improved or had no effect on basic training (Christenson, 1999).

### **1999 Commentaries**

Six commentaries were examined from 1999. If the men and women of the Navy are expected to fight together, then they must continue to train together wrote Gunner's Mate First Class Terry L. Buckman. The services must assign more good leaders to gender-integrated

training, he wrote. "Dynamic leadership," he wrote, "can provide a positive role model over and above the distractions of a gender-integrated military" (Buckman, 1999). A retired Army officer wrote in *USA Today* that women distract from training (Hamilton, 1999). In a commentary titled "Men, women and war" in the *Wall Street Journal*, Stephanie Gutmann wrote that sex integration in initial entry training has devastated morale and recruitment. "Basic training has morphed into something even a veteran who did boot camp in the mid-1980s wouldn't recognize" (1999). Gutmann's book, *The Kinder, Gentler Military: Can It Fight?* when it appeared in 2000 was critical of the military's political correctness.

Writing in the *Washington Times*, Robert Maginnis called the Blair Commission's decision "a blow to common sense." He noted that after years of mixed-gender training, the British military found that returning to sex segregation in basic training dramatically cut injuries among women, decreased incidents of sexual misconduct and improved rates of success. The retired Army lieutenant colonel wrote mixed-gender training would have a long-term training impact, contributing to a readiness decline. Problems with mixed-gender basic training are clear, he stated: higher personnel losses, more injuries to female service members, a less ready force and ongoing leadership problems (1999). A West Point faculty member wrote in a 15-page article in *Minerva*: "The variables salient for gender integration are categorized as intervening and include: characteristics of the organization, occupational ideology, and individual characteristics. The interaction of these variables leads to a variety of outcomes." He concluded "at a time when men and women are serving side by side in the majority of Army specialties, to segregate them at initiation could potentially have drastic effects on both performance and attitudes" (Reed, 1999). Reed also suggested some research be conducted about drill sergeants, specifically those who have combat specialties and have limited service with women. Another area for further research is the effect female drill sergeants have on male and female platoons.

## **2000 News Stories**

Six stories about gender-integrated training were located for 2000. One dealt with Marine segregated basic training at Parris Island. Another story in the *Washington Post* told how the October attack on the USS Cole marked the first time that women permanently assigned to a Navy combatant ship have died in an attack on that ship. The story quoted retired Navy Captain Georgia Sadler: "The public understands that people who serve in the military can be killed, regardless of their gender. Thus, the public is taking the deaths of women in stride, and, rightfully, mourning for all the casualties of the Cole as sailors and heroes" (Ricks & Vogel, 2000).

## **2000 Commentaries**

Among the five commentaries for 2000 was "Gender and the civil-military gap" by Sara E. Lister, former Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, in the January *Proceedings*. Lister discussed a gap between civilian society and the military, and pointed out that the gap creates problems, "but those problems do not justify either a diminution of civilian control or a reduced role for women, as some have maintained." The author called for the military establishment to recognize that it is responsible for ensuring that every soldier can do his or her job, without interference or harassment because of gender (2000).

## Pilot Opinion Survey

To express their opinions to some issues raised by the media in covering the gender-integrated training issue, 56 members of the active-duty Equal Opportunity Advisor Class at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute were surveyed. Preparing to become military equal opportunity advisors, the students receive instruction on gender relations, and they are expected to be knowledgeable of current events. The questionnaire collected basic demographic data such as gender, race/ethnic group, age group, enlisted or officer status. Respondents were asked if they attended gender-integrated training. Response options on the 10 opinion questions ranged from "1 – totally agree" to "5 – totally disagree." A copy of the questionnaire is at Appendix B.

Twenty-two respondents were women, and 34 were men. The racial/ethnic breakdown included one American Indian/Alaskan Native, two Asians or Pacific Islanders, 29 African Americans, three Hispanics, 20 Whites, and one other. The group included 51 enlisted service members, four officers and one civilian. Age ranges were: under 25, 1; 25-30, 2; 31-35, 21; 36-40, 20; and over 40, 12. Thirty-nine students responded they did not attend gender-integrated training, while 17 had participated.

The statement "Men and women should be separated during military basic training" received an overall mean of 3.18 with women having a mean of 3.41, leaning toward "moderately disagree." Men were almost neutral with a 3.03 mean. One-fourth of respondents totally agreed with the statement, while 32 percent totally disagreed with it. When asked if women and men should train together because they work together, women had a mean of 1.91, compared to the men's mean of 2.26, both "moderately agree." Half of the respondents totally agreed with the statement.

Responses from men (3.35 mean) and women (3.41 mean) were close on the statement concerning whether men and women should have to meet the same physical training standards. Twenty (35.7 percent) students chose the "moderately disagree" response. Men and women disagreed most about the statement that double standards are used for men (2.82 mean) and women (3.41 mean) during gender-integrated training. A t-test comparing the differences in means of women and men showed a significant difference in their responses ( $P < .05$ ).

When asked if gender-integrated training will cause a "soft" military, the women scored one of their highest means (4.09) on the survey, moderately disagreeing while the men's mean was 3.79, also indicating disagreement with the statement. Forty-one percent of the students totally disagreed with the "soft" statement. Both women (2.55 mean) and men (2.82) agreed that gender-integrated training will improve military readiness. A total of 46.4 percent totally agreed or moderately agreed on the readiness question.

In response to the statement that trainees do not get enough privacy, women had a mean of 3.41, compared to the men's 3.12. Forty-three percent of respondents gave a neutral answer about privacy. Concerning whether gender-integrated training leads to sexual attractions/distractions, women disagreed with a mean of 3.18, while men tended to agree (2.74 mean) with the statement. Nearly 45 percent of the students either totally agreed or moderately agreed about

sexual attractions/distractions. When asked if gender-integrated training leads to more sexual harassment complaints, women disagreed with the statement (3.64 mean) more so than men (3.12 mean). Thirty percent of respondents selected a neutral opinion on the sexual harassment statement. Men (3.62 mean) and women (4.09 mean) disagreed with the statement that gender-integrated training would have a negative effect on recruiting. Twenty students (35.7 percent) chose "totally disagree" for that statement. Table 1 shows a summary of tests of differences in means for women and men.

In previous studies of similar groups of DEOMI students, this researcher found in 1997 that women strongly disagreed to separate basic training with a mean of 4.28. Men had a mean of 3.85, and a *t*-test found a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ). However, in 2000, the difference in the women's mean of 3.32 was much closer to the men's 3.23, and a *t*-test revealed no significant difference (Murray, 2000). Based upon these respondents' opinions, one might infer that as

**Table 1**

**Summary of Tests of Differences in Means for Women and Men**

| Statement                                 | Women (N=22) |      | Men (N=34) |      | <i>t</i> | Sig.      |
|---|--------------|------|------------|------|----------|-----------|
|   | Mean         | SD   | Mean       | SD   |          |           |
| Separate-gender basic training            | 3.41         | 1.56 | 3.03       | .73  | .855     | N. S.     |
| Should train and work together            | 1.91         | 1.38 | 2.26       | 1.48 | -.901    | N. S.     |
| Same physical standards for all           | 3.41         | 1.47 | 3.35       | 1.28 | .151     | N. S.     |
| Trainees do not get enough privacy        | 3.41         | 1.26 | 3.12       | 1.01 | .957     | N. S.     |
| GIT will cause "soft" military            | 4.09         | 1.23 | 3.79       | 1.09 | .943     | N. S.     |
| GIT leads to sexual attract/distractions  | 3.18         | 1.37 | 2.74       | 1.42 | 1.165    | N. S.     |
| Double standards are used for men/women   | 3.41         | .91  | 2.82       | 1.06 | 2.135    | $P < .05$ |
| GIT leads to more sexual harass. cmplt    | 3.64         | 1.18 | 3.12       | 1.09 | 1.682    | N. S.     |
| GIT will help improve readiness           | 2.55         | 1.26 | 2.82       | 1.38 | -.761    | N. S.     |
| GIT will have a neg. effect on recruiting | 4.09         | 1.07 | 3.62       | 1.23 | 1.479    | N. S.     |

gender-integrated training becomes more commonplace, service members' opinions about it lose strength. However, when responses of those who attended gender-integrated training were compared with non-attendees, different results were obtained.

When responses were compared between those persons who had attended gender-integrated and those who had not, five significant differences were found. The groups showed disagreement on these statements: separate basic training, GIT will cause a "soft" military, GIT leads to sexual attractions/distractions, double standards are used for men and women, and GIT will have a negative effect on recruiting. Generally, persons who attended gender-integrated training displayed stronger opinions than those who did not attend. For example, GIT graduates strongly agreed that men and women should train and work together and strongly disagreed that GIT will lead to a soft military and have a negative effect on recruiting. Comparisons of GIT attendees and non-attendees are in Table 2.

**Table 2**

**Summary of Tests of Differences in Means for GIT Attendees and Non-attendees**

| Statement                                 | Attended GIT |      | Non-attendees |      | <i>t</i> | Sig.    |
|---|--------------|------|---------------|------|----------|---------|
|   | Mean         | SD   | Mean          | SD   |          |         |
| Separate-gender basic training            | 4.06         | 1.34 | 2.79          | 1.60 | 2.855    | P< .05  |
| Should train and work together            | 1.59         | 1.00 | 2.80          | 1.55 | -1.883   | N. S.   |
| Same physical standards for all           | 2.88         | 1.58 | 3.59          | 1.19 | -1.853   | N. S.   |
| Trainees do not get enough privacy        | 3.65         | 1.17 | 3.05          | 1.05 | 1.886    | N. S.   |
| GIT will cause "soft" military            | 4.41         | .870 | 3.69          | 1.20 | 2.232    | P< .05  |
| GIT leads to sexual attract/distractions  | 3.47         | 1.33 | 2.67          | 1.39 | 2.024    | P< .05. |
| Double standards are used for men/women   | 3.47         | 1.01 | 2.87          | 1.00 | .2049    | P< .05  |
| GIT leads to more sexual harassment       | 3.53         | 1.33 | 3.23          | 1.06 | .895     | N. S.   |
| GIT will help improve readiness           | 2.47         | 1.50 | 2.82          | 1.25 | -.903    | N. S.   |
| GIT will have a neg. effect on recruiting | 4.41         | 1.33 | 2.90          | .87  | 2.682    | P< .05  |

The two largest race-ethnic groups in the survey were African-Americans (N = 29) and Caucasian (N = 20). When the means of their responses were compared and a *t*-test was applied, the only significant difference found among the ten statements concerned the statement about double standards being used for women and men ( $P < .05$ ). The mean of the African Americans was 3.34, compared to the mean of 2.65 for the Caucasians. Results are summarized in Table 3. Responses to the statement about the double standards proved to be significant when tested between men and women, GIT attendees and non-attendees, and African Americans and Caucasians. This pilot study dealt with 56 persons in one class. This researcher would like to expand the study to other classes and perhaps to active service members and Reserve Components.

**Table 3**

**Summary of Tests of Differences in Means for African-Americans and Caucasians**

| Statement                                 | African-Americans |      | Caucasians |      | <i>t</i> | Sig.      |
|---|-------------------|------|------------|------|----------|-----------|
|   | Mean              | SD   | Mean       | SD   |          |           |
| Separate-gender basic training            | 3.38              | 1.52 | 2.80       | 1.73 | 1.237    | N. S.     |
| Should train and work together            | 1.90              | 1.21 | 2.55       | 1.70 | -1.576   | N. S.     |
| Same physical standards for all           | 3.48              | 1.33 | 3.35       | 1.39 | .338     | N. S.     |
| Trainees do not get enough privacy        | 3.28              | 1.52 | 3.10       | 1.33 | 1.976    | N. S.     |
| GIT will cause "soft" military            | 4.10              | 1.08 | 3.55       | 1.28 | 1.636    | N. S.     |
| GIT leads to sexual attract/distractions  | 2.86              | 1.38 | 2.75       | 1.41 | .277     | N. S.     |
| Double standards are used for men/women   | 3.34              | 1.01 | 2.65       | 1.09 | 2.293    | $P < .05$ |
| GIT leads to more sexual harassment       | 3.21              | 1.18 | 3.35       | 1.04 | -.438    | N. S.     |
| GIT will help improve readiness           | 2.66              | 1.23 | 2.85       | 1.42 | -.510    | N. S.     |
| GIT will have a neg. effect on recruiting | 3.86              | 1.38 | 3.65       | 1.09 | .607     | N. S.     |

## Summary and Conclusions

During this content analysis covering the period 1997-2000, 110 news stories and 36 printed commentaries were examined. Most news stories contained information provided by news releases, briefings and reports. In most cases, more stories appeared around the dates when panels were announced or when the panels presented their reports. Most of the stories were balanced, allowing views from opponents and proponents of gender-integrated training. More columnists wrote in favor of gender-segregated training than wrote in support of integrated training. An opinion questionnaire was completed by 56 members of the active-duty Equal Opportunity Advisor Course to express their opinions concerning 10 questions raised by press coverage of gender-integrated training. Generally, both men and women favor gender-integrated training. The survey showed men and women disagreed most about the statement that double standards are used for men and women during gender-integrated training. An analysis of variance showed a significant difference in the responses ( $p < .05$ ).

Here are answers to the research questions of this study:

- R1: To what extent would newspapers emphasize information about gender-integrated training?** The coverage appears to have been rather thorough as the number of news stories were 49 in 1997, 43 in 1998, 12 in 1999, and 6 in 2000.
- R2: Do the news reports appear to be accurate?** The reports were based on facts and listed the sources of information.
- R3: Did press commentaries favor gender-integrated training or oppose it?** By about a 2-1 margin, editorials and commentaries were against gender-integrated training. Some influential persons, such as Senator Snowe and U.S. Rep. Maloney wrote in favor of gender-integrated training, while U.S. Rep. Bartlett wrote and spoke against it.
- R4: Will the number of articles and commentaries decrease each year?** Yes, as the interest in the issue increased and decisions and compromises were made, the number of articles decreased. The numbers of news stories were 49 in 1997, 43 in 1998, 12 in 1999, and 6 in 2000. There were 18 commentaries in 1997, 7 in 1998, 6 in 1999, and 5 in 2000.
- R5: Regarding the survey: Will there be significant differences in opinions between men and women, African Americans and Caucasians, and persons who completed gender-integrated and those who did not?** Comparisons of means showed differences of opinions between men and women. Results of the survey showed men and women, and African Americans, disagreed most about the use of double standards when it occurred during gender-integrated training. When responses of gender-integrated attendees and non-attendees were compared, significant differences were found in half of the responses. Summaries of the comparisons were presented in Tables 1-3.

As far as the future of gender-integrated training is concerned, one writer stated regarding the Blair Commission report, it "may be the final word in the long debate over mixed-sex training" (Scarborough, 1999). Blair said she still is concerned about the overworked trainers and the need for more of them. Other factors to consider, she said, are cost effectiveness, billeting, recruiting, avoiding excessive injuries to women, and the overall quality of life in the military (Blair, 2001). Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has tasked another panel to examine morale and quality of life in the military. The American public holds the military in high regard, but "the propensity to serve is very low," Retired Adm. David Jeremiah, a former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters on June 13, 2001 (Rhem, 2001). Improving the quality of life and morale will include training. Whether the training is gender-integrated or separate, when changes occur, the press will be there to cover the news and provide a forum for exchange of opinions.

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**Appendix A**

**Coding Form**

**Publication** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**News** \_\_\_\_\_ **Commentary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Does the item emphasize information about gender-integrated training? (circle)**

**All            Very much            Somewhat            Very little            None**

**The item's coverage is (circle)**

**Very positive    Mostly positive    Neutral            Some negative    Very negative**

**Subject of commentary:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Survey on News Media Coverage of Gender-Integrated Training in the Military

Military leaders, members of Congress and the news media have discussed the topic of gender-integrated training in recent years. As an equal opportunity officer, you could be dealing with cases stemming from gender-integrated training. We are interested in your perceptions of the effect of the publicity on the military, especially of gender-integrated basic training. Your opinions will help us in this research. Please take a few moments to respond to the following statements, writing your answers on the questionnaire.

#### PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with DoD Directive 5400.11, the following information about this survey is provided:

- a. Authority: 10 USC, 131.
- b. Principal Purpose: The survey is being conducted to gather your opinions about news media coverage of sexual harassment in the military.
- c. Routine Uses: Information provided by respondents will be treated confidentially. The averaged data will be used to identify perceptions of the surveyed group. Averaged results may be published in a DoD or civilian publication, but no individuals will be identified.
- d. Participation: Response to this survey is voluntary. Your response will help ensure the validity of the survey. We appreciate your participation.

#### Demographic Data

1. I am
  - 1 = female.
  - 2 = male.
2. My racial/ethnic group is
  - 1 = American Indian or Alaskan Native.
  - 2 = Asian or Pacific Islander.
  - 3 = African-American (not of Hispanic origin).
  - 4 = Hispanic.
  - 5 = White (not Hispanic origin).
  - 6 = Other.
3. I am a/an
  - 1 = enlisted service member.
  - 2 = officer/warrant officer.
  - 3 = civilian.
4. My age is
  - 1 = Under 25 years.
  - 2 = 25-30.
  - 3 = 31-35.
  - 4 = 36-40
  - 5 = Over 40
5. Did you attend gender-integrated basic training?
  - 1 = Yes
  - 2 = No

### News Media Coverage of Gender-Integrated Training in the Military

In this section, please give your opinion. Please circle the corresponding number to your response as follows:

- 1 = totally agree with the statement  
2 = moderately agree with the statement  
3 = neither agree nor disagree with the statement  
4 = moderately disagree with the statement  
5 = totally disagree with the statement

1. Men and women should be separated  
during military basic training. ....1 2 3 4 5
2. Women and men should train together  
because they will work together. ....1 2 3 4 5
3. Women and men should have to meet  
the same physical training standards. ....1 2 3 4 5
4. Trainees do not get enough privacy during  
gender-integrated basic training. ....1 2 3 4 5
5. Gender-integrated training is causing  
the military to grow softer. ....1 2 3 4 5
6. Gender-integrated training creates  
situations with sexual attractions/distractions. ....1 2 3 4 5
7. Double standards are applied to men and  
women during gender-integrated training. ....1 2 3 4 5
8. Gender-integrated training leads to more  
sexual harassment complaints. ....1 2 3 4 5
9. Gender-integrated training will help  
improve military readiness. ....1 2 3 4 5
10. Gender-integrated training will have  
A negative effect on recruiting. ....1 2 3 4 5